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Downham Market Urban District Council

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR 1949

To which is appended the Report of the Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor.

DR. C. T. DARWENT, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

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Downham Market Urban District Council

Members of the Public Health Committee

Mr. C. E. Bowman, *Chairman.*

Mr. A. G. Barber

Mrs. G. B. E. Bennett

Mr. A. C. Dye

Rev. W. B. S. Dorman

Mrs. I. M. Burbeck

Mrs. G. H. Stannard

Mr. J. Hinton

Mr. E. A. Walker

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Dr. C. T. Darwent, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Also holds the appointment of :—

Asst. County Medical Officer of Health.

Asst. County School Medical Officer.

Medical Officer of Health to Downham Rural District.

Medical Officer of Health to Marshland Rural District.

SANITARY INSPECTOR & SURVEYOR.

J. F. Lorimer, M.R.San.I.

STOKE FERRY,

June, 1950.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in again presenting my Annual Report of the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the District for the year ending the 31st December, 1949.

The vital statistics for the year remain satisfactory and the health of the community is of a high level. The number of infectious diseases notified, shows a marked increase. This is accounted for solely by an epidemic of Measles (125 cases) during the summer months.

NO cases of Diphtheria have occurred in the district and only one case of Tuberculosis was notified.

This year I have included in my report a section dealing with the Health Services, appertaining to your District, I trust it will be both helpful and informative.

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the help at all times afforded me by the Clerk to your Council.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

C. T. DARWENT,

Medical Officer of Health

To The Chairman & Members
of the Downham Market Urban District Council.

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS, 1949.

Area (in acres)	1003
Population, 1931 Census	2465
Population, 1949	2640
Number of separate dwellings occupied, 1931....	approx. 750
Number of separate dwellings occupied, 1949....	869
Rateable Value, 1949	£14105
Product of a Penny Rate, 1949	£55

The comparability figure as given by the Registrar General for the year 1949 is 0.77.

LIVE BIRTHS.

	Total	Male	Female	Rate. Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	45	28	17			
Illegitimate	4	2	2			
	49	30	19	16.8	16.7	15.16

STILL BIRTHS (Rate per 1,000 (Live and Still Births)).

Total	Male	Female	Rate. Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
1	1	—	20	—	21.5

DEATHS (all causes).

Total	Male	Female	Rate. Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
33	19	14	9.6	11.7	12.19

DEATHS from Puerperal Causes.

Puerperal and post-Abortive Sepsis	Nil.
Other Puerperal Causes	Nil.

INFANT MORTALITY (Rate per 1,000 Live Births).

	Total	Male	Female	Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	1	1	—			
Illegitimate	1	—	1			
	2	1	1	40	32	29.17

DEATHS FROM

Cancer (all ages)	2
Measles (all ages)	Nil.
Whooping Cough (all ages)	Nil.
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	Nil.

SECTION A.

Natural and Social Conditions.

Area (acres)	1003
Population	2640

DEATHS. After adjustment for inward and outward transfers the total number of deaths assigned to the District was 33.

BIRTHS. The number assigned to the District was 49 as compared with 52 in 1948.

MATERNAL MORTALITY. There were NO maternal deaths.

STILL BIRTHS. One still birth was recorded out of a total of 50 births.

INFANT MORTALITY. Two infants under 1 year of age died during 1949.

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services.

1. GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES.

   Norfolk Executive Council, 54, Prince of Wales Road, Norwich.
   Clerk — R. J. Cobb, Esq.

2. EAST ANGLIAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD.

   Senior Administrative Medical Officer:—

   Dr. J. B. Ewen, M.D., D.P.H.,

   Croft Holme, 117, Chesterton Road, Cambridge.

   Since the 5th July, 1948, Hospitals have become the responsibility of the Regional Hospital Board, each Hospital being under the control of a Hospital Management Committee.

   (a) GENERAL.

   (i) Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Norwich.
   (ii) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital, King's Lynn.
   (iii) Jenny Lind Hospital, Norwich.
   (iv) St. James' Hospital, King's Lynn (for chronic sick).

(b) Maternity.
(i) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital (Maternity Unit).
(ii) Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

(c) Infectious.
(i) County Isolation Hospital, East Dereham.
(ii) Isolation Hospital, King's Lynn.

(d) Sanatoria.
(i) Kelling Sanatorium, Holt.
(ii) Bramblewood Sanatorium, Holt.

(e) Mental.
(i) St. Andrew's Hospital, Norwich.
(ii) Hellesdon Hospital, Norwich.
(iii) Heckingham Sanatorium, Norwich.
(iv) Little Plumstead, Norwich.

3. MATERNITY SERVICES.

(a) District Nurses.
Nurse Reeves, 2, London, Road, Downham Market. } Downham Market / Downham West.

(b) Maternity. Beds in Regional Hospital Board Establishments.
Stow Hall Maternity Home, Stow Bardolph.

4. AMBULANCE AND HOSPITAL CAR SERVICE.

This is a County Council function and is controlled by the Joint Ambulance Committee. It is worked on an Agency basis by the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John and W.V.S.

The Downham Urban area is served by the Downham Market Ambulance which made 324 journeys during the year.

Infectious Disease cases are conveyed by East Dereham and King's Lynn Infectious Disease Ambulances.

5. RED CROSS MEDICAL LOAN DEPOT.

Downham Market. Mrs. I. M. Burbeck, Court House.

6. COUNTY MEDICAL SERVICES.

(a) Downham Market Infant Welfare Centre is held at the British Red Cross Headquarters, Howdale Road.

The Assistant County Medical Officer of Health attends at the above session which is held from 2 to 4 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

The ladies of the local branch of the British Red Cross have voluntarily given their services at each session Their help has been greatly appreciated.

(b) School Minor Ailment Clinic.
Downham C.P. Mixed School. (Every third Wednesday during term.)

(c) School Dental Clinic.
Downham C.P. Primary School. (Every Thursday during term.)

(e) Home Help Service.
The County Home Help Scheme is doing excellent work and Home Helps cover the whole of the Downham Urban area.

7. VENEREAL DISEASE CLINIC.
West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital:—

Males	Females & Children
Tuesdays & Fridays at 7 p.m.	Tuesdays & Wednesdays at 3 p.m.

8. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION.
(i) Disinfection of premises is carried out by the Senior Sanitary Inspector's staff.
(ii) Disinfestation of bedding, clothing, etc., which cannot be carried out by this department are sent to the East Dereham Isolation Hospital.

9. LABORATORY SERVICES.
(a) Public Health Laboratory,
Isolation Hospital.
Bowthorpe Road,
Norwich.
Under the direction of Dr. I. M. Dowsett.

(b) Public Analyst:—
W. Lincoln Sutton, Esq., F.R.I.C.,
Redwell Street,
Norwich.

SECTION C.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and other Diseases.

SMALL POX. Nil.

SCARLET FEVER. No cases were notified during the year. This was welcome, but at the same time most surprising, as sporadic outbreaks of Scarlet Fever were occurring throughout the surrounding rural areas.

DIPHTHERIA. No case was notified during 1949.

Immunisation against Diphtheria is carried out by the family doctors. A few odd children are immunised at the Infant Welfare Centre at the parents' request.

The total number of children immunised since the inception of the scheme and up to the 31st December, 1949, is 415.

Child Population	0 to 4 years	5 to 14 years
616	251	365

Under 1 year	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 to 9 yrs.	10 to 14 yrs	Total
3	25	26	24	36	170	131	415

WHOOPING COUGH. No official notifications were received in respect of this disease.

MEASLES. This disease accounted for all the notifications received, with the exception of one. There were 125 cases, 65 of which occurred in children of 5 years of age group. The peak months of the disease were June and July in which 98 cases were notified.

NO deaths were assigned to this cause.

TUBERCULOSIS. The following Table indicates the incident of Tuberculosis in the District:—

Tuberculosis (all forms)			Rate per 1,000 of population Downham Market U.D.C.	County Rate per 1,000
Male	Female	Total		
1	—	1	.37	.68

SECTION D. Table No. 1.

STATISTICAL TABLES, 1949.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Causes of Death.		*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
1.	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	—	—	—
2.	Cerebro Spinal Fever	—	—	—
3.	Scarlet Fever	—	—	—
4.	Whooping Cough	—	—	—
5.	Diphtheria	—	—	—
6.	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	1	1	—
7.	Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—	—
8.	Syphilitic disease	—	—	—
9.	Influenza	—	—	—
10.	Measles	—	—	—
11.	Acute polio-myelitis and polio encephalitis	—	—	—
12.	Acute infective encephalitis	—	—	—
13.	Cancer of the buccal cavity & oesphagus (m)	—	—	—
	uterus (f)	—	—	—
14.	Cancer of stomach and duodenum	—	—	—
15.	Cancer of breast	1	—	1
16.	Cancer of all other sites	1	1	—
17.	Diabetes	1	1	—
18.	Intra-cranial vascular lesions	7	5	2
19.	Heart disease	8	5	3
20.	Other diseases of circulatory system	5	1	4
21.	Bronchitis	—	—	—
22.	Pneumonia	1	1	—
23.	Other respiratory diseases	1	—	1
24.	Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	—	—	—
25.	Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	—	—	—
26.	Appendicitis	—	—	—
27.	Other digestive diseases	1	1	—
28.	Nephritis	—	—	—
29.	Puerperal and post-abortive sepsis	—	—	—
30.	Other maternal causes	—	—	—
31.	Premature birth	1	—	1
32.	Congenital malformations, birth injury and infantile diseases	1	1	—
33.	Suicide	—	—	—
34.	Road traffic accidents	1	1	—
35.	Other violent causes	—	—	—
36.	All other causes	3	1	2
	All causes	33	19	14

SECTION D. Table No. 2.

CAUSES OF DEATH OF CHILDREN UNDER ONE YEAR, 1949.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Age in Weeks 1	2	3	4	5—52	Total
I. Congenital Malformations ..		1				1
II. Diseases of Early Infancy : (a) Congenital Debility						
(b) Premature Birth					1	1
(c) Injury at Birth						
(d) Atelectasis						
(e) Others						
III. Diseases of Respiratory System						
IV. Diseases of Nervous System ..						
V. Diseases of Digestive System ...						
VI. Tuberculosis Disease						
VII. Infectious Disease						
VIII. Syphilis						
IX. Overlaying						
X. Violence						
XI. All other causes						
Total :		1			1	2

Table No. 3.

NEW CASES OF AND DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS, 1949.

Age in yrs.	NEW CASES Respiratory Male	Respiratory Female	Non-Respiratory Male	Non-Respiratory Female	DEATHS Respiratory Male	Respiratory Female	Non-Respiratory Male	Non-Respiratory Female
— 1								
— 5								
—15								
—25	1							
—35					1			
—45								
—55								
—65								
65+								
Totals.	1				1			

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES — TABLE No. 4

NOTIFICATION IN AGE GROUPS

Disease.	Under 1 yr.	1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	20—	35—	45—	65 & over	Total	Removed to Hospital	Deaths
Scarlet Fever	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Cerebro Spinal Fever	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Diphtheria	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Measles	4	7	12	11	12	65	14	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	125		
Whooping Cough	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Erysipelas	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Pneumonia	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Puerperal Pyrexia	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Infective Jaundice	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1		
Acute Poliomyelitis	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Dysentary	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.		
Totals :	4	7	12	11	12	65	14	1	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	126		

TABLE NO. 5.

MONTHLY INCIDENT OF NOTFIABLE DISEASES.

(Other than Tubercolosis).

Disease.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apl.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Scarlet Fever	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Cerebro Spinal Fever	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Diphtheria	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Measles	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1	2	32	66	17	4	3	Nil.	Nil.	125
Whooping Cough	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Erysipelas	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Pneumonia	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Puerperal Pyrexia	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Infective Jaundice	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Dysentary	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Totals :	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1	2	32	67	17	4	3	Nil.	Nil.	126

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR AND SURVEYOR.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting for your consideration my Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1949.

1. **Inspections during the year.**

(a)	Total number of houses inspected for defects	35
(b)	Number of inspections for the purpose	52
(c)	Number of houses found not to be in all respects fit for habitation	18

2. (1) Remedy of defects during year without service of formal notices 18

(2) Action under Statutory powers:—

(a)	Housing Act, 1936	Nil.
(b)	Public Health Act	1

3. **Number of New Houses built during 1949.**

(a)	Under Housing Acts by Local Authority	Nil.
(b)	By Private enterprise	2
	Total number of houses owned by Urban District	106
	Houses under construction by Urban District	22

4. **Meat Inspection.**

The whole of the meat supplied in the town comes from the Ministry's slaughter-houses at King's Lynn. During the year 375 lbs. of beef and 28 lbs. of mutton were condemned as unfit for human consumption.

5. **Food Inspection.**

No adulteration of any foodstuffs was reported during the year. 190 tins and packets of various foodstuffs were voluntarily surrendered as unfit for human consumption during the year.

6. **Milk and Dairies.**

During the year Milk and Dairies Registration came into force. There are two producer-retailers and three retailers in the district.

7. **Moveable Dwellings.**

There is one case of moveable dwelling in the area.

8. **Public Cleansing.**

(a) Scavenging. The whole of the scavenging on both County and District roads is undertaken by the Council's workmen. On the whole, the streets are kept tidy.

(b) Refuse Collection. House refuse is collected weekly throughout the district. A number of properties situated just outside the boundary are also served. Disposal is by means of tipping on land adjoining Railway Road. The tip is well controlled and reasonably free from vermin. There are still cases of premises not being equipped with regulation dust-bins, besides being unsanitary the makeshift arrangements are a source of danger to the workmen who handle them.

(c) Cesspool and Pail Emptying, Etc. There are quite a large number of premises which are drained to cesspools. The tenants make their own arrangements for the disposal of the sewage.

9. **Salvage.**

(a) Paper. The order for compulsory salvage collection was withdrawn during the year. The Council, however, decided to continue the collections. 33 tons 4 cwts. 2 qrts. of paper were dispatched to the Thames Board Mills. This is an average of approximately 28 lbs. per head of population.

(b) Rags and Bones. The Council do not operate a scheme for the removal of these wastes.

10. **Sewerage.**

During the year the Council accepted in principle a preliminary scheme for the re-sewering of the district and the construction of new Sewage Disposal Works. Owing to the unsatisfactory condition of the existing system, it is hoped that the Ministry of Health will agree to the Council going ahead with the preparation of a detailed scheme as soon as possible. Considerable trouble has been experienced during the year through sewers becoming blocked. The main reason being red brick sewers collapsing and lack of a sufficient gradient in many sewers so that they are not self-cleansing.

11. **Dangerous Buildings.**

No cases were brought to the notice of the Council during the year under review.

12. **Water Supply.**

The water supply in the District is from the mains of the Wisbech Water Works Co., who derive their supplies from deep wells in the chalk at Marham. There are still a number of properties in the town which are not connected to the mains and are dependant for their supplies from shallow wells. During the year, 12 properties were connected to the Companies mains. Eight samples of well water were taken during the year. As a result, under Section 138 of the Public Health Act, 1936, as amended by Section 30 of the

Water Act, 1945, notices were served on the owners of four properties requesting them to connect to the mains.

13. **Disinfection and Disinfestation.**

During the year three houses were disinfected at the occupiers' request. No cases of Bed Bugs were reported.

14. **Destruction of Rats and Mice.**

The Refuse Tip was surprisingly very clear of rats. Poisoning is done by contract by the Norfolk Agricultural Committee. Poisoning was carried out by the Council's employees at the Sewage Works and on the sewerage system.

15. **Dirty Premises.**

One case on private property and one or two cases in Council property were notified to the Council. The houses in question are kept under regular inspection.

16. **Factories and Workshops.**

One case of insufficient sanitary accommodation was dealt with without notice being served under the Factories Act. A second case was dealt with under Section 7 of the Factories Act.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. F. LORIMER,

Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor.